

REMARKS

This Amendment responds to the Office Action mailed December 9, 2008 in the above-identified application. Based on the foregoing amendments, allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-40, 42 and 44-47 were previously pending in the application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 17, 19, 23, 35 and 36 are amended. Claims 16, 18, 33 and 34 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 1-15, 17, 19-32, 35-40, 42 and 44-47 are currently pending, with claims 1, 23 and 40 being independent claims. No new matter has been added.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3, 7-13, 23, 25-30 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Shinomiya et al. (US 2003/0185148) in view of Saleh et al. (US 6,801,496). Claims 2 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Shinomiya et al. in view of Saleh et al. as applied to claim 1, further in view of Fortuna (US 6,778,833). Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Shinomiya et al. in view of Saleh et al. as applied to claim 3, further in view of Lotter et al. (US 7,218,645). Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Shinomiya et al. in view of Saleh et al. as applied to claim 1, further in view of Rabie et al. (US 7,092,356). Claims 14 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Shinomiya et al. in view of Saleh et al. as applied to claim 1, further in view of Havansi (US 5,905,714). Claims 15 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Shinomiya et al. in view of Saleh et al. as applied to claim 1, further in view of Greaves et al. (US 6,396,815). Claims 16 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Shinomiya et al. in view of Saleh et al. as applied to claim 1, further in view of Liu et al. (US 2005/0068954). Claims 17, 19-22 and 36-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Shinomiya et al. in view of Saleh et al. and Liu et al. as applied to claim 16, further in view of Izmailov et al. (US 2005/0015511). Claims 18 and 34 are indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 40, 42 and 44-47 are allowed.

The indication of allowable subject matter is acknowledged with appreciation. Applicants do not necessarily concur with the above rejections. Nonetheless, in order to advance prosecution of the application, the limitations of allowable claim 18 and intervening claim 16 have been incorporated into amended claim 1. In addition, the limitations of allowable claim 34 and intervening claim 33 have been incorporated into amended claim 23. Accordingly, amended independent claims 1 and 23 are in condition for allowance. Claims 2-15, 17 and 19-22 depend from claim 1; and claims 24-32 and 35-39 depend from claim 23. These claims are allowable for the same reasons as the respective independent claims.

Based upon the above discussion, claims 1-15, 17, 19-32, 35-40, 42 and 44-47 are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicants hereby request any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Dated: February 20, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

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